

IN THE LITERARY WORLD

WEEKLY CHAT REGARDING WRITERS AND BOOKS.

A Contribution to the "Magazine of American History" by a Richmond Woman—*Historic Gloucester.*

The "Magazine of American History" for July-August opening with a paper upon "The Houdon Statue of Washington" by Miss Nannie B. Winston, of Glen Allen, Va. The article is well illustrated by the illustrations representing respectively "The Houdon Statue of Washington," "Statue of La Fayette by Houdon," and "The Gallery of the Rotunda" in the Capitol at Richmond. The character of the Magazine is a guarantee that whatever comes to a place between its covers possesses true literary merit not less than historic interest. Its contents are invariably of a character which appeals to the cultivated intelligence, and which is of national value. The August number is no exception to the rule, and it is gratifying to Virginians to note that the first place on its table of contents is given to a Virginia woman who writes upon a theme that touches history so directly, for the glorious old Commonwealth, which bears along with the dignity of age the inevitable and honorable traces of many and noble struggles, is not only the proud parent of a work of the kind which is acknowledged to be "the most faithful transmission of the features of Washington's life, but the pure hearted and high-souled patriot was her own loyal son, born, reared and buried in her soil which is fertile in memories given to blood. He was her Washington created by great deeds for great services; educated by mighty emergencies for mighty successes; and he was the first to bear that class of men who are the greatness and endeavor to tear down what they could never have builded, claim that the times in which he lived "made Washington" what he was and what he did, and as a degradation the many become to the minds of intelligent people, thoroughly conversant with early American history the sublimest praise which the blindest devotee to sentiment could bestow. Great leaders are dead, but their deeds are still in the times in which they lived; it is the test of genius to be able to rise to great necessities and make of them great opportunities. But to attempt any praise of a man who has become historic is simply to attempt a repetition of what has been better said a thousand times, and to whose greatness the silent eloquence of results is the noblest and most effective testimonial.

The statue which Miss Winston's interesting article deals is one with which we are all familiar, and perpetuates the physical personality of the illustrious patriot as the source of history perpetuates the memory of his mental and moral characteristics and his actions. The fame of the sculptor and the subject has always made the statue an object of special interest to visitors to our city, and a reading of Miss Winston's simple and attractively written sketch page sketch which contains in a nutshell the history of the statue with its frequent side strokes and pictures of Washington, the private citizen gives to the already interested surveyor the additional appreciation which increased information regarding any work of art invariably produces.

Incorporated into the body of the article is a naive and characteristic letter sent by Thomas Jefferson to Washington then living the simple life of a quiet country gentleman—the Virginia gentleman of the primitive era when virtue and entire simplicity went hand in hand and were a courageous little boy of the nation's founders. The letter is as follows: "Paris July 18th, 1786. Monsieur Houdon, you have just received the honor of my sending you, but for fear of sickness which long ago induced us to dispair of his recovery. He comes now for the purpose of lending the aid of his art to transmit you to posterity. He is without rivalry in it, being employed in all parts of Europe in whatever is capital. He has order of the Empress of Russia a difficulty, however, that arose from a desire to show his respect, but with such an eye to a moment's hesitation about the voyage, which he considers as promising the brightest chapter of his history. I have spoken of him as an artist only, but I can assure you also that as a man he is disinterested, generous, and full of the noblest feelings; in every circumstance meriting your good opinion. He will have need to see you much while he shall have the honor of being with you, which you can merit give him admission into gentle societies here.

Houdon, "whom Jefferson pictures as a disinterested, generous, candid and painting after glory "is the famous artist whose great statues of St. Bruno, and the disheveled and suffering Voltaire, and bust of Diderot, Albrecht, Rousseau, the great Catherine of Russia and countless other notables, will alone suffice to hand his name down to coming generations as one who breathed life into all but the breath of life. He was the first portrait sculptor of his day and Paris is beautiful to-day with the results of his subtle chisel, and discerning intellect." The English artist, Foyette, which adorns a niche in the State Capitol, feeling the figure of Washington for whom the French patriot cherished so high a regard, and so deep an affection, it also his work.

Miss Johnson quotes La Fayette as declaring the Houdon statue "was a facsimile of Washington's person" and she also quotes from a paper written by Dr. Parker of our city in which he later recalls an interview, which he had with Rembrandt Peale in Richmond, in 1866, when he was eighty years old and very feeble. In spite, however, of the weakness of his body, Foyette, consequent upon his advanced age, he made a pilgrimage to the Capitol to look once again upon the Houdon statue.

"It was with great difficulty that he ascended the steps leading to the statue, but as soon as he caught a glimpse of the figure in marble, he seemed inspired with new life. With head erect and beaming eyes, he gazed intently upon the statue in form as if to secure the truth of the point of view. After thus contemplating it, he muttered in soliloquy: 'That's the man—that's the man himself.' It is not necessary to attempt any justification of the Houdon statue, for it is a work which has already been done. About one third of Miss Winston's article consists of quotations, usually from Jefferson—woven gracefully into the body of her sketch. Her literary style is pure, correct, attractive, and it never sparkles nor metaphorical, it is on the other hand never flimsy nor characterized by that gushing, weak effusive sentimentality which so many women writers fall into, and which might be termed "literary system." It is always displays a cultivated mind, a well balanced personality, and the kind of talent which has in it the seed of growth and increasing success, the kind of force which has the strong quality of "continence." We feel that this one of Virginia's literary "debutantes" has "come to stay."

160,000 words in the work, which may be divided into three nearly equal parts of about 50,000 each. First, the documents; second, the biographies; and third, the faces, contents, lists of illustrations, sketches, notes on the documents, etc., and index.

The documents may also be divided into three nearly equal parts of about 50,000 words each. First, those which are comparatively accessible, being scattered through books which could be bought for a reasonable sum until the editor had come to the end of his rope. Second, those known to exist, but comparatively inaccessible, being scattered about here and there through the great libraries, few of them to be purchased at any price, many of them to be obtained only in the original. Third, those unknown and hitherto inaccessible.

But "The Genesis" documents, which are new and are not important solely, on that account. They are chiefly important because they render a new reading and new views of all the old matter necessary, an important fact that might escape many hasty readers.

The biographies represent the largest amount of outlay. The former, however, would have been just as costly if the author had been obliged to buy the books from which they were compiled, instead of the important documents which are not in any other work, is to give information not found in the history.

All three of the features of the "Genesis" is the fact that it renders new reading of all old matter necessary, and the new matter, the new matter, is equally important to the historian, the student, and the general reader; they furnish a mass of valuable information not obtainable in any other work published. Bernard Quaritch, of London, who is probably one of the best judges of such works, says: "It is of high value and will enlighten Americans as to where many of the most important documentary sources of their history are hidden and preserved."

While some blame has been heard from Virginians on account of the author's treatment of John Smith, still more readers, both in Virginia and out of it, commend him for it. From the first the author seems to fully appreciate the hold Smith's history had obtained in Virginia, and claims that if he had found that it conveyed, even approximately, fair ideas of the man, he would have rejected the story; but believing that the truth of history and justice to our founders alike demand that he protest against it, he did so.

The maps, plans and portraits are beautiful, and the large and largely to the value of the work. It has been well said: "Without doubt it is the most imposing work from the hands of a Virginian in our day."

A REVIEW—"The Law of Incorporated Companies," by Allen Ripley Foote and Charles E. Everett. Robert Clarke & Co., Cincinnati. Price \$15.

Mr. Justice Miller, in the case of *Liverpool Insurance Co. vs. Oliver*, 15 Wall 244, in 1854, the demand for the use of the corporate powers in combining the capital and the energy required to conduct the business of the country, is an imperative fact, by statute and by the tendency of the courts to meet the requirements of these public necessities, the law of corporations has been modified, liberalized and enlarged as to constitute a branch of jurisprudence with a code of its own, due mainly to very recent times.

The work before us belongs to that branch of jurisprudence last mentioned. It has for its subject such incorporated companies as, for instance, gas companies, electric central station companies, telephone companies, street railway companies, water companies, etc.

The three volumes give the law of such corporations under municipal franchises in all the States and Territories of the United States, including the District of Columbia and Alaska. The work is done by well-known editors, with an associate editor in each State and Territory chosen for his acquaintance with the subject. The selection of a practitioner so experienced in this branch of the profession as Mr. Meredith R. Marshall, Jr., of the Richmond bar, to prepare the treatise upon the law in Virginia will justify the reader in valuing the standard of authorship.

The purpose of the work as stated in the preface is to induce to induce others to engage in an exhaustive discussion of the fundamental principles upon which municipal, political and industrial corporations must be founded, if citizens of municipalities are to enjoy the greatest obtainable advantages from the use of modern municipal conveniences.

No general question of governmental policy occupies at this time so prominent a place in the thoughts of the people, as properly controlling, without unnecessarily checking, the growth of corporate power.

Men group themselves into municipalities for the purpose of securing industrial, commercial, educational and social advantages—municipalities being political organizations created by the State for the purpose of serving the welfare of its citizens through local action.

The alphabet of municipal needs, for every well organized and developed municipality, so far as its location will admit, the editor calls well placed, clear and lighted through a system of streets, railroads, a well planned and equipped system of fire, police, and hospital service; public baths; public market houses; abattoirs; navigable channels; bridges; docks; postal service; water supply capable of serving every building; gas and electric service for producing light, heat and power in every building; frequent and rapid transit for intelligence persons, and property; union depots; elevators and warehouses; furnaces; sailing vessels; canal and steamboat service; railroads; stores; restaurants; telegraphic and telephone service. The questions of municipal ownership, municipal inspection, municipal aid as well as other important questions are ably discussed. The editor says: "We sought to elucidate principles and clearly to define strategic points in order to measure by fundamental rules the progress made by the several States in aligning legislation with the requirements of such corporations."

lows: "1. That in respect to county roads the public have only an easement limited to the right of passage; that the fee is in the abutting owners or in the heirs of the original grantor; that a company creating poles, laying pipes, etc., is liable to pay compensation to adjoining owners; that there may be an exception in favor of the use of the road by a street car company."

2. That all streets which have been dedicated, unless by an express dedication that passed the fee simple title and not merely an easement, or all streets laid off merely an easement, or all streets laid off or otherwise used prior to the year 1850, or otherwise used prior to the year 1850, are still the property of the abutting owner, subject to this right of passage. A company using such streets would be liable for damages unless the court should hold that such use was included in the more extensive easement which the public acquires in the streets of a town.

3. All streets condemned since 1850 can, upon proper authority, be used by a corporation erecting poles or laying pipes, without compensation to the adjoining owners.

4. But, even since 1850, in a street laid off or otherwise dedicated, but not condemned, the public would only have an easement and a corporation would be liable to pay damages to abutting owners, provided its use was shown to be an additional servitude.

5. As to streets dedicated by plat and coming within the provisions above given (chapter 46, Laws, 1859-60), it is expressly provided that only an easement is conveyed. Additional damages, however, if the use of the street by a corporation duly authorized can only be obtained by showing that such use is an additional servitude.

The editors of this work have done a service to the public and the legal profession, and have made suggestions that will be of great value to the legislator and the student of economic legislation.

The Rio de la Plata. Were it not for a decided difference in the color of the water you would never know when the Atlantic is left and the Rio de la Plata entered. The high rolling, white capped billows are the same, and no land is visible, for the great river which James Diaz de Solis discovered is 135 miles wide at its mouth, though with an average depth of only 50 feet. Sebastian Cabot, who arrived in the year 1492, soon after the discovery of the river, found it so narrow of its color, which might have won for it the more appropriate name of Golden river or River of Chocolate, but because he had wrested quantities of silver from the Indians who swarmed its banks, and naturally imagined that an abundance of precious metal remained in the vicinity.

In point of fact, the terms Argentina and Rio de la Plata (both meaning silver) are misnomers, for no metals of any sort, precious or otherwise, are found along the banks of the mighty stream or anywhere near it, and the scanty argentiferous deposits in the hills of the interior have never been worked. The Indians, however, probably obtained the silver which so excited Spanish cupidity from Peru and Bolivia by some primitive system of internal commerce known only to themselves.—Philadelphia Record.

Marsh Lands Made Valuable. Time was in this State that the marsh lands were considered as of so little value that the more a man owned of them the poorer he was reckoned. Of late years, however, the development of the cranberry industry has modified the views on this point, and farmers are speculating on the possibility of finding other profitable uses for the marshes and meadows. High scientific authority has declared that most of the swampy and boggy lands about the State not available for cranberry culture can be converted into soil for the cultivation of berries and vegetables in great variety.

The demand for such products is yearly growing, even faster than the population. The systematic development of these industries might have the whole some effect to draw from the cities a class of people who live in close sunny quarters that our civilization provides for the working men. As in Holland, France and Florida they have accomplished brilliant results with similar lands, there is nothing fantastic in the suggestions here made.—Boston Transcript.

Here's to That Girl's Health. A girl in a Maine village who made her home with her aunt was often disturbed by evidence of the old lady's indifference to everything but the welfare of her own material possessions. One day in going down the cellar for some other trifling article, she heavily quit a distance. The maiden rushed to the door, and peering down into the darkness called out sharply: "D'y' break the dish?"

"No!" thundered back the niece, for once thoroughly aroused, "Not but I will!" and she shivered in with hearty good will against the cellar wall.

It is believed that the old lady was so shocked by this dramatic exhibition of maternal love that she took her bed and kept it for a week.—Lewiston Journal.

Eight More Lives to Live. "Hoopdoo," remarked George W. Best the other afternoon as he entered his office after luncheon, "you know that song about how the cat came back?"

The amateur photographer, somewhat bewildered at the question, answered that he thought he had heard it, and Mr. Best continued, "Well, I just heard of a tabby which discounts the cat of the song."

"Why, they tried to drown tabby in a big tub of water last night. Tied a brick to her neck, threw her in and this morning—well, they found tabby had swallowed all the water and was sitting on the brick to keep her feet dry."—New York World.

The Place to Check Cholera. A European cholera expert believes that the best way to conquer that disease is by going to the roots of the evil by attacking it in the delta of the Ganges, in India, where it is endemic. The area of the district is 7,500 square miles. Its constant presence there is believed to be due to the putrefying remains of animal and human bodies of the inhabitants, which are cast into the river instead of being buried. If the bodies were cremated, it is believed that the disease could be eradicated.

A Michigan farmer and his wife were swindled out of \$1,000 by a very smooth and cunning trick. They were called upon to sign as witnesses what they supposed was a marriage certificate, but in reality was an order on the bank where they had an account.

Artificial teeth are more generally used than ever. Dentists increase in all parts of the country, and they cater for all classes of society. The whitest teeth are used for actresses and others of the theatrical profession.

TALK ABOUT SNAKES.

WELL, HERE IS A BOSTON DRUMMER WHO KNOWS SOMETHING.

He Spent a Whole Night in a Tree That Was Swarming With the Reptiles and Tells His Experience.

"Talk of snakes," said the drummer from Boston, as the crowd received the cheerful information that the train was an hour late, and settled down to pass the time as best it might, "I spent a night once surrounded by not dozens, but hundreds. Real good spirits, none of those produce of the imagination, either. It was just seven years ago this fall that business for my firm led my wanderings down to Sabine Pass, a little town in Texas, on the Gulf coast. I was tired out by the journey down, struggling with an old, slow steamer, struggling with a patched-up paddle and an antiquated engine, so that I turned in early. It must have been somewhere in the neighborhood of midnight that I was awakened by a dull, booming sound, afar off, and a trembling of the earth.

It sprang from the ground and rushed to the window and by the light of the moon—a weak-eyed, sickly Diana as ever fought the clouds—I could make out what seemed a solid wall of water advancing from the sea. It was on the top of the engine, and the men could run for their lives, and house after house shrank into nothingness as a lump of sugar might. In an instant more I was out in the water battling the murky waves, and ducking from the timbering which high in the air as the angry tide seized them in its cruel paws. I had always supposed myself to be a fair swimmer, but the odds were too fearful against me for me to be able to long sustain myself in the seething, eddying flood.

My head was under water, my head was giddy with the force of the vortex, and I flung out my hand in an attempt to steady myself, as I did so a chicken coop floated past with a dripping rooster standing on top shrieking demently. I caught the structure and seized it like a life preserver, and the next moment I was struggling with it succeeded in getting up beside the discomfited lord of the poultry yard.

"My weight sank the coop to within an inch or two of the water, but over this precarious position I sat and waited. No more. We then joined in the mad race in which dead cattle, branches of trees and trees themselves, with every now and then a human body with a set white face starting up at the pitiless sky, would float on as if to a devil's dance. Every now and then some one of these objects would collide with the rooster's and my frail craft and we would go under, but the next moment we would emerge again and would reach out and seize my life preserver again in this strange voyage and fetch him up again to his perch by my side. Once as I mounted my coop after a plunge of this sort, a long black snake shot up from the water, and in a vicious snarl told me that in addition to the ghastly objects on top of the water, there were even more dreadful creatures below in the shape of alligators, and I shuddered to think of what would become of the bodies that were before we were living, joyous human beings. Again I saw the corpse of a baby about a year old float by, one chubby hand still clutching a rag doll which it was as if to a devil's dance.

"All at once the coop came in violent contact with a large water-oak tree that stood still upright before the flood, with its branches reaching up into the sky. It was in mute protest of the sight it looked upon. As the coop struck this body I was thrown off, and when I would have seized the craft again, it was whirled out of my reach by the mad rush of the tide, and I was again thrown against the tree, but this time I caught at the end of one of the lower branches depending about a foot from the water, and seizing that I drew myself out of the current, and reaching up found another hand still larger bough near me, and so from one to another I climbed as well as my soaking garments would allow, though fortunately these were of the lightest possible material.

"The moon now went out behind the gathering clouds and left the scene in profound darkness, and I could only imagine the horrors about me, and so when presently my hand touched something gleamy and cold I could not at first identify its nature, but when it moved along the branch in a slow, sinuous movement I guessed at once the fearful character of the creature occupying that tree with me. But I had no time to do more than from this horror snatch a quick look when I felt another drop from somewhere over my head and land on my bare neck. I reached up and caught the long shape by the tail and with a jerk flung it back into the water, and I did so with a sense of a third crawling on the other arm, by which I still held on to the tree. I shuddered with real terror, for I knew this low country was infested with the most venomous varieties of the rattlesnake and the big green water moccasin, but there were only the two courses open to me—to keep perfectly passive under the reptiles' passages over my body and not to provoke them to an attack, when my fate would be sealed, or to face death at once by dropping off the tree into the black flood swirling beneath.

"I resolved to take the first chance and steel myself to endure the touch of the horrid creatures, that, attracted by the warmth of my body, began to crawl. One sought a refuge in the open shirt at my throat and coiled himself about my neck tightly, scarcely giving me power to breathe, while another climbed into my breast, and lay there a horrid shape, no doubt watching with its evil eyes every movement. There were snakes all about me, above, beneath me, hanging from the boughs, swinging lightly to and fro, crawling up and down the portion of the tree that remained above the surface of the water. I grew sleepy finally, but I knew that to give up to my drowsiness would be death, for if I fell into the water the alligators would not have even my bare bones to tell the story of my fate, while if I held on indefinitely even in my sleep, the least unguarded movement would be to excite the snakes into attacking my defenseless body.

"So, shuddering and sick at heart, I waited for the dawning of day, for the hours in that tree seemed each to be a week. My seat itself was precarious, for the water had swollen it so that it was a mass of slimy, very offensive to the smell, and rendering them something of the nature of a slippery pole. But a man can do much in the face of death of which he thinks himself incapable at other times, and so I wrapped my bare legs about that snake-festooned tree as lovingly as if there had been a prize offered for it, and my fate would be sealed, or to face death at once by dropping off the tree into the black flood swirling beneath.

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Muslin Underwear Greatly reduced during this Sale, in order to close out certain numbers. You get the benefit between regular prices as have been charged and prices charged now. See?

SKIRTS. Lot No. 1 were 75c; now 50c. Lot No. 2 were \$1; now 67c. Lot No. 3 were \$2.50; now \$1.67. Lot No. 4 were \$3.50; now \$2.00. (These garments are trimmed with lace and embroidery.)

CORSET COVERS. Lot No. 1 were 50c; now 39c. Lot No. 2 were \$1.00; now 67c. Lot No. 3 were \$1.25-\$1.50; now 79c-98c. (These garments are trimmed with lace and embroidery.)

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